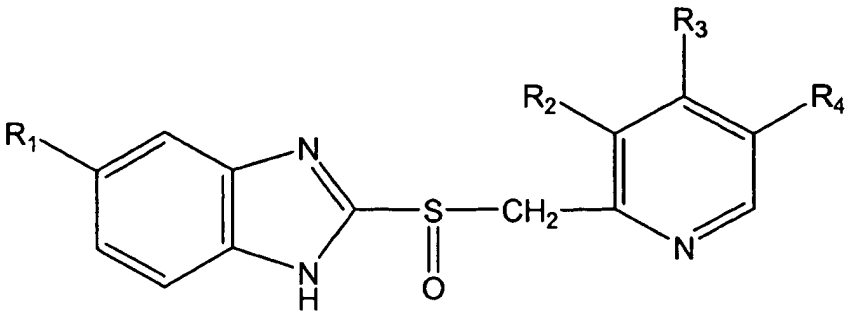
In the claims:

Please amend claims 1, 12, 17, and 18 as shown in the following listing of the entire claims in the application.

1. (Currently Amended) An oral pharmaceutical preparation in the form of pellets containing a benzimidazole compound of formula I



in which R_1 is hydrogen, methoxy or difluoromethoxy, R_2 is hydrogen, methyl or methoxy, R_3 is methoxy, 2,2,2-trifluoroethoxy or 3-methoxypropoxy and R_4 is hydrogen, methyl or methoxy, comprising

(a) an inert core

(b) to which is applied a layer containing an active ingredient which contains the benzimidazole compound of formula I

(c) one or more optional separating layers and

(d) an outer layer comprising an enteric coating,

wherein the benzimidazole compound of formula I is mixed with a stabilizer comprising microcrystalline cellulose.

2. (Previously Presented) The pharmaceutical preparation according to claim 1, in which the benzimidazole compound of formula I is omeprazole, lansoprazole, rabeprazole or pantoprazole.

3. (Previously Presented) The pharmaceutical preparation according to claim 1, in which the microcrystalline cellulose is composed of particles having a mean particle size of 100 μm or less.

4. (Previously Presented) The pharmaceutical preparation according to claim 3, in which the microcrystalline cellulose is composed of particles having a mean particle size of 50 μm or less.

5. (Previously Presented) The pharmaceutical preparation according to claim 4, in which the microcrystalline cellulose is composed of particles having a particle size of about 20 μm.

6. (Previously Presented) The pharmaceutical preparation according to claim 3, in which the particle size distribution of the microcrystalline cellulose is such that less than 10% of the particles are 250 μm or greater in size and less than 50% of the particles are 75 μm or greater in size.

7. (Previously Presented) The pharmaceutical preparation according to claim 4, in which the particle size distribution of the microcrystalline cellulose is such that less than 2% of the particles are 250 μm or greater in size and less than 30% of the particles are 75 μm or greater in size.

8. (Previously Presented) The pharmaceutical preparation according to claim 5, in which the particle size distribution of the microcrystalline cellulose is such that less than 0.1% of the particles are 250 μm or greater in size and less than 1% of the particles are 75 μm or greater in size.

9. (Previously Presented) The pharmaceutical preparation according to claim 1, in which the microcrystalline cellulose has a bulk density of 0.30 g/cm^3 or less.

10. (Previously Presented) The pharmaceutical preparation according to claim 9, in which the microcrystalline cellulose has a bulk density of 0.30 g/cm^3 or less.

11. (Previously Presented) The pharmaceutical preparation according to claim 1, in which the layer with the active ingredient contains a binder which is

hydroxypropylmethylcellulose or hydroxypropylcellulose.

12. (Currently Amended) The pharmaceutical preparation according to ~~claims~~ claim 1, in which the amount of microcrystalline cellulose is 25% to 150%, based on the weight of the amount of benzimidazole compound of formula I.

13. (Previously Presented) The pharmaceutical preparation according to claim 1, which has a separating layer containing microcrystalline cellulose and a binder.

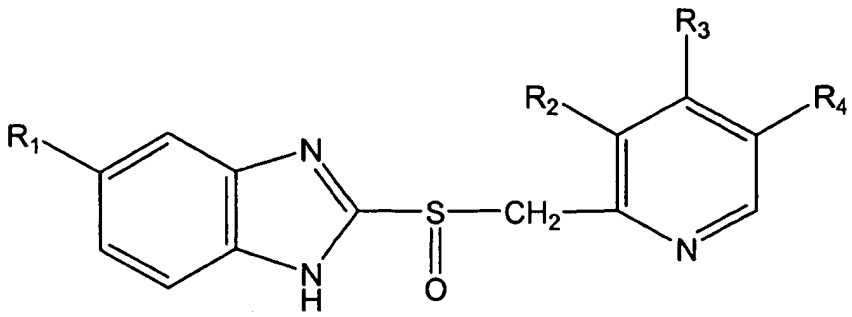
14. (Previously Presented) The pharmaceutical preparation according to claim 13, in which the separating layer contains a binder which is hydroxypropylmethylcellulose or hydroxypropylcellulose.

15. (Previously Presented) The pharmaceutical preparation according to any one of claims 13 or 14, in which the separating layer contains microcrystalline cellulose in the amount of 25% to 100% by weight based on the amount of binder.

16. (Previously Presented) A method for manufacturing a pharmaceutical preparation according to claim 1, in which the benzimidazole compound of formula I is applied to an inert core to thereby form a layer with active ingredient, to which layer with active ingredient a separating layer is optionally applied, and an outer layer in the form of an enteric coating is applied.

17. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 16, in which the layer containing the active ingredient is applied ~~form~~ from an aqueous dispersion.

18. (Currently Amended) A method for improving the stability of a benzimidazole compound of formula I



in which

R_1 is hydrogen, methoxy or difluoromethoxy,

R_2 is hydrogen, methyl or methoxy,

R_3 is methoxy, 2,2,2-trifluoroethoxy or 3-methoxypropoxy and

R_4 is hydrogen, methyl or methoxy,

wherein said compound is mixed with a stabilizer comprising microcrystalline cellulose to form a pellet comprising an inert core, an active ingredient layer, one or more optional separating layers and an outer layer comprising an enteric coating.

19. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 18, wherein the benzimidazole compound of formula I is omeprazole, lansoprazole, rabeprazole or pantoprazole.

20. (Cancelled)